Our Community

Environmental Commitment

Committed to a healthy environment for future generations

Overview

Los Alamos National Laboratory is committed to following all federal and state laws, regulations and requirements in its operations, and to minimizing any harm to the environment caused by its activities.

Awards

Governor Gary Johnson presented *Green Zia Environmental Excellence Awards* to seven Laboratory employees and programs in 2001 to recognize their efforts in pollution prevention.

The Laboratory's food service provider, Aramark, won a *Commitment Award* for its strong commitment to pollution prevention.

Native American Business

Subcontracts valued at $1 million each were awarded to Cochiti, San Ildefonso, Santa Clara and Jemez pueblos to perform Cerro Grande fire mitigation work. Technical assistance will be provided in the development and implementation of their business systems and processes, and to help the pueblos establish infrastructures for future business development opportunities related to Laboratory work.

Household Hazardous Waste Program

The first Española Household Hazardous Waste disposal event was held in April 2001. Duratek Federal Services, Inc., the City of Española, and the Laboratory cosponsored the event.

More than 2,200 gallons of antifreeze and 50 gallons of bulk flammable liquids were disposed of safely. More than 100 cars passed through the La Loma transfer station to drop off 200 gallons of various household chemicals, 350 gallons of paint, 200 aerosol cans and 160 batteries.

Water Modeling

A Laboratory-developed aquifer model shows slow flow and significant dilution effects in the deep aquifer beneath the Laboratory. LANL hydrogeologists developed a computer model that illustrates groundwater movement over time and, for the first time, predicts deep aquifer flow from the Pajarito Plateau area eastward beneath the Rio Grande. Proactive community and Tribal interactions are still underway to share the model's predictions and implications for water supplies in the tri-county region.

The Laboratory undertook the aquifer-modeling project as part of its ongoing environmental monitoring and surveillance activities. LANL scientists regularly analyze deep and shallow groundwater samples, as well as water from Los Alamos water-supply wells, for the presence of potential contaminants including metals, organic compounds or radioactive materials.

All water samples collected to date from the Los Alamos aquifer meet all federal drinking water standards.

Working together to ensure water quality in the acequias.

Environmental Progress

- Airborne radiation effective equivalent dose: reduced from 3.9 mrem in 1989 to 0.64 mrem in 2000 compared to the Environmental Protection Administration's 10 mrem standard.
- Reduction of wastewater outfalls: lowered rom a baseline of 141 outfalls in 1993 to 20 in 2000.
- Outfall samples exceeding government Clean Water Act standards: dropped rom a baseline of 31 in 1994 to 0 in 2000.
- Hazardous waste generation: the 1993 baseline of approximately 300 metric tons was reduced to approximately 40 metric tons in 2000.
- Low-level waste reduction: 1993 base of 1,987 cubic meters dropped to approximately 400 in 2000.
- Routine sanitary waste: 1993 baseline of 2,780 metric tons was reduced to approximately 2000 metric tons in 2000, with much of the achievement coming from recyclable materials.
- Transuranic (TRU) waste storage – completed a project two years ahead of schedule and $13M under budget to allow full inspection of all TRU waste containers.

Los Alamos National Laboratory is operated by the University of California for the U.S. Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration

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505-665-4400, 800-508-4400 or Public Affairs Office 505-667-7000

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